Is 'Adi Granth Sahib - "The Guru"?

Harjinder Singh Kanwal.

I am trying to discuss that the 'word' or 'Shabad' is 'Guru' and not the Adi Granth, as the 'shabad' has been 'guru' from times immemorial and to compare it with the Adi Granth is not right, although the 'Bani' of the Guru Granth Sahib is Gods word - but the 'Shabad' Guru Nanak refers to is the eternal word residing in the 'Dasam Duar' or the Agya Chakra of the Kundalini, which rings in all humans and awakens during meditation (Simran).

Secondly the arguments I want to put forward are the historical facts about Guru Gobind Singh's death at Nanded and the controversial issue of the 'Gurgaddi' to the Adi Granth.

What is the difference between the 'word' or 'shabad' and the Adi Granth? The Granth Sahib - a composition of poetry of six Gurus and thirty one bhagats, compiled in 1430 pages - does it really correspond to the word 'Shabad' ? When questioned by the Nath Yogis regarding the 'Guru' of Nanak - the Guru had replied 'Shabad Guru, Surat dhun chela'- meaning the 'Shabad' was his Guru - but what 'Shabad'? Not the Adi Granth - which was not even in existence at that time.

The Bible describes the beginning of the universe from a 'word' and so does the Geeta that names the 'shabad', emancipated by the Almighty before the evolution of marikind. During meditation it is the 'shabad'* which becomes your spiritual guide during deep penetration of the 'surat' into the 'dasam duaar'(10th door) or the 'Agya chakra', from which this 'Shabad' is your only means of a companion/guide to the 'Nij dham'(the eternal house or Sachkhand).

Guru Nanak - saying that His Guru was the 'Shabad' - in fact is an indication that His reach is to 'Sachkhand'- the Throne of the Almighty. A shabad is also called the 'Gurmantar' which a Guru whispers in the ear of the disciple - as Guru Aijan says in Raag Kanra;-

*Manhe pargas blmeo bharam naseo, **mautar** deo gur **kaan**"*
(Guru Granth Sahib - page1302)

The 'Gurmantar' is the foremost initiation a shish or disciple receives from his Guru. This is the 'Shabad' he has then to meditate upon. After regular chanting and deeply absorbing his mind into this, the meditator (seeker) reaches the state whereas his 'shabad' intermingles with the 'surti' or conscious and this combination is the time of eternal bliss (Shabad surat mail). But it is not the end - as later on this word which the Guru has given in the ear also vanishes and another 'word' - the 'Shabad' of God takes over and completes the rest of the journey of the meditator to Sachkhand.

By giving a brief account of the 'shabad', I want to differentiate between the 'shabad' and the 'Adi Granth'. The Granth, a compilation of poetry of Gurus and Bhagats are mainly repetitions on the Glory of God and also relate messages and instructions to the devotee Sikh as to what his duties are. The Adi Granth is full of couplets where the Gurus have implored the Sikh to beseech 'Naam' from a 'Satguru', i.e.

"Bin satgur nau n paiye, bin naave kea suau"
(Sri raag Mahalu 1 page 58)
"Bin satgur naam na pa'ye, bl16If bin naam bharam na jai"
(Sorath Mahal‹i 1 page 635)
"Bin satgur datci ko nahin jo har naam dei adharu"
(Salok warn muhol‹i 3 page 1417)

and so on..........

It was Guru Ramdas, the 4th Guru who wrote :-
"Bani Guru, Guru Hat hani which bani amrit sare"

If the above quotation was meant for the 'bani' to be 'Guru' then the need for the 5th to the 10th Guru was not essential. The Adi Granth was nearly cannonised during Guru Arjan's time - only a few salokas of Guru Tegbahadur ji were added on to it by Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

The Historical facts ! What happened at Nanded?

Now the question arises why Guru Gobind Singh broke the traditional chain of living Gurus and decided to give the 'Gurgaddi to the Adi Granth.

My convictions are that he did neither. Let us look at the facts when the Guru was at Nanded during his last days.

There was no Adi Granth available at the time it is perceived that the Guru gave the 'gurgaddi to the Adi Granth. No mention of the Adi granth available at Nanded is recorded in the main historical granths e.g. Panth Parkash (Rattan Singh Bhangu), Gur Partap Suraj (Bhai Santokh Singh) and Gur Bilas (Bhai Sukha Singh). Although it is said in the 'Mahankosh' by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha that the 'Gurgaddi' wala Granth Sahib was in 1818 AD taken to Kabul by the invader Abdali - but after considerable research nothing could be traced (page 437 under 'Granth Sahib'- Mahankosh).

Even and if an Adi Granth was available and the 'Gurgaddi' was given to it - should it not be the most "Important" and "Prominent" relic of the Sikh Panth? And the Guru **Granth placed in an "Exceptional" and "Revered" place with the inscriptions that this was the ACTUAL "Beed" (Adi Granth) that the Guru bestowed the 'Gurgaddi' to.**

I would like to quote from Mcleod's Sikhism - page 127,
"There is no reliable historical work which suggests a) that the Guru died in the presence of the Sikhs; (b) that the Sikhs actually performed the cremation by setting light to the pyre. What history tells us is that the Guru, still alive, sat on the pyre and then ordered the Sikhs to leave the enclosure which had been constructed by placing screen around the pyre. Indeed, he went even further than this. He sternly commanded them to stand with their backs to the enclosure and then insisting that his Sikhs, having left it, should stand with their backs to it?"

Is it not ironic that the Guru who preaches 'suicide' as the worst of crimes - is sitting on the funeral pyre while alive ?

After the "cremation", the Guru helped two Rajahs of Rajput origin who were jailed in the Pune Fort and who had asked for the Guru's deliverance. The Guru brought them to Manmad (a town near Nanded), where a gurdwara stands to mark this momentous feat. Also are recorded the first-hand information given by some ascetics who met the Guru on Horseback and told them to go and console the Sikhs who were in mourning at Nanded. All this happened within a couple of days of the 'funeral'.

These are but a few facts that prove that the Guru did not die at Nanded - nor He gave the 'gurgaddi' to the Adi Granth. The Adi Granth was always installed at a higher level than the Gurgaddi. Lowering it from its original place, was it meant to raise or lower its prime status ?

No Adi Granth Sahib had the prefix "Guru" scribed on it until the 1860's. i.e. ,only during the Singh Sabha time did this prefix 'Guru' was added to the Granth Sahib - as all manuscripts available before the Singh Sabha time have Adi Granth or Pothi Sahib etc., scribed on them.

I have a copy of a 'Gutka' printed in 1897 AD by Munshi Gulab Singh & Sons, Lahore (copy enclosed) which has the Sikh Ardas finishing at Guru Gobind Singh and not once the Guru Granth Sahib has been mentioned. Had the Adi Granth been the 'Guru' - then, until 1897 this would have been a confirmed belief and the Sikh Ardas would not have been such.

An extract from "The Sikhs of Punjab" by I.S.Grewal on page 147 denotes:-
"The idea of the Guru-Panth became stronger with the increasing importance of Singh identity. In a tract published in 1919, it was argued that no human being could be the Guru of the Sikhs after Guru Gobind Singh decided to vest Guruship in the Adi Granth. The Sikhs were 'to view themselves as the Panth and not to recognize any single person as their sole leader'. The loss of Guru-Panth was emerging as clearly as the equation of the Guru with the Adi Granth."
If the Granth 'Guru' was an established fact, the above decree by the 'Singh Sabha' in "1919" (nearly two hundred years after Guru Gobind Singh) would not have been necessary.

"Agya bhaee akaal ki tabi chalaeo panth, Sab sikhan ko hukam hai Guru Manio Granth"

The above 'dohra' (couplet) is chanted after 'ardas' in most gurdwaras and is thought to be the last decree (hukam) of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, after he ordained the 'Gurgaddi' to the Adi Granth at Nanded.

The above 'dohra' is categorically not Guru Gobind Singh Ji's last command - as it is not in any of Guru's hukamnamas or the 'Dasam Granth'.

A brief history of this 'dohra' is as follows: -

This ‘dohra’ was first published in the 2nd. edition of the ‘Panth Parkash’ of Giani Gian Singh in Bik. 1943. at Amritsar. But before this edition three editions of the ‘Panth Parkash’ had already been printed. The first one in Delhi in Bik. 1936., second one in Lahore in Bik. 1941 and third one in Lahore in Bik.1943 of stone print. In fact this Bik. 1943 Amritsar printed ‘Panth Parkash’ called the second edition should have been the fourth edition - but it has second edition printed on it and the ‘dohra’ included in this. The previous three editions do not contain this dohra’. A few years ago (1980’s AD) the ‘Panth Parkash’ was edited and published by Bhai Sahib Bhai Kirpal Singh Ji ex-head Granthi of the Golden Temple and he clearly states under what circumstances this ‘dohra’ was included in the ‘Panth Parkash’ without the knowledge of Giant Gran Singh Ji who had given all his rights to the Singh Sabha at that time because of his illness, and how the Singh Sabha took advantage of that and distorted the original texts of Giani Ji.

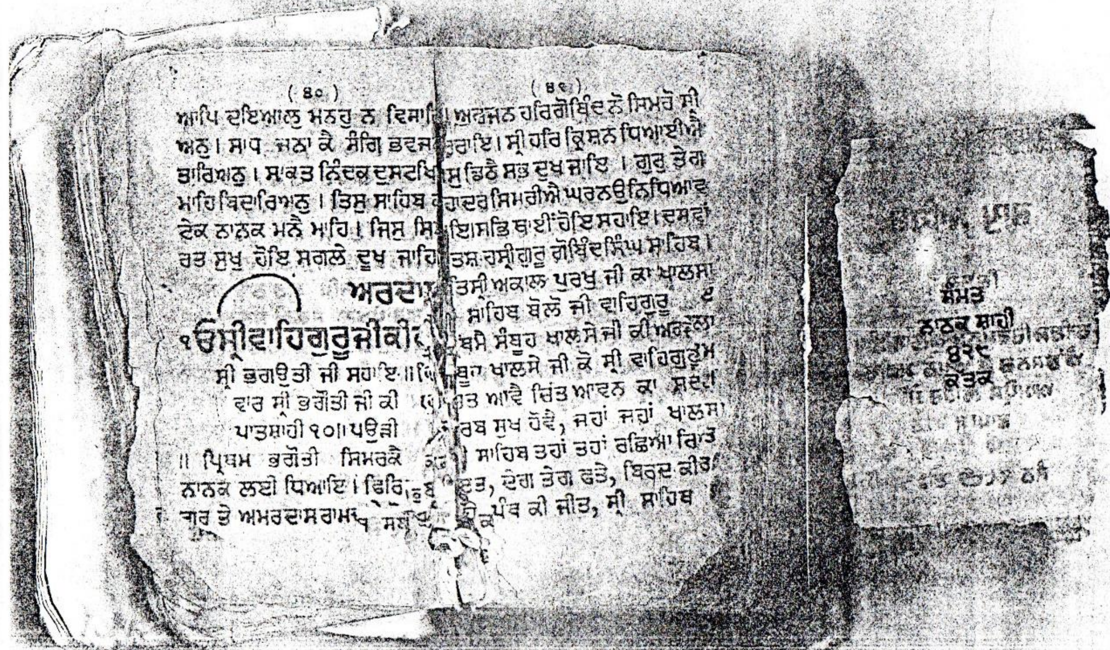
Another place where this ‘dohra’ is supposed to be written is the ‘Rahitnama’ of Prahlad Singh. When we look at the Mahankosh - Bhai Kahn Singh dismisses this ‘dohra’ as a fabrication by some poet -as the date on this rahitnama is Bik. 1752 when the Khalsa was not even created nor Guru Ji was at Nanded (Copy from Mahankosh enclosed) . The Singh Sabha leader Gurmukh Singh was solely responsible for this falsehood. (This is said in the rahitnama of Prahalad Singh, who says that Gurmukh Singh ordained him to write this rahitnama).

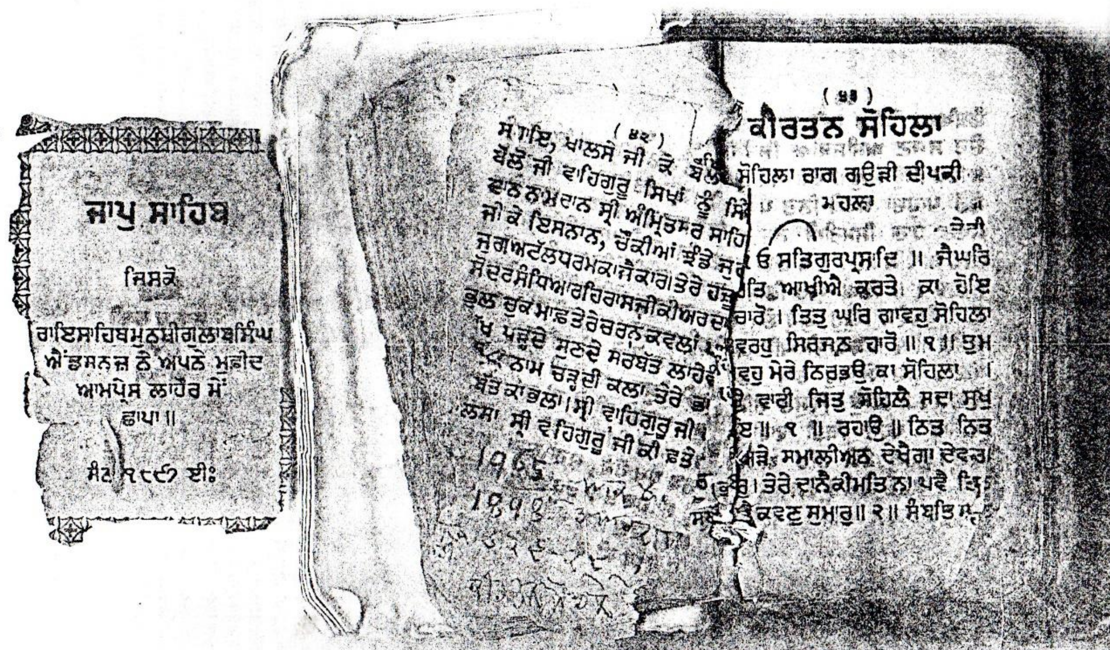
The fabrication of the prefix “Guru ” to the Granth Sahib was a very political move by the British to divide the Sikhs, so that the Namdhari Movement, the arch enemy of the British, and who believed in the living Guru became a thom in the side of the British faithful Sikhs who ruled alongside the British, as their stooges. During April 1857 the Sant Khalsa was initiated by Satguru Ram Singh - the growth of the Sant Khalsa was phenomenal. In a few years 10 lakh^ (one hundred thousand) Sikhs were initiated and became Amritdhari Khalsa with orthodox Khalsa traditions and took to arms against the British. The British used their most effective weapon “Divide and Rule” to overcome the Sikhs and the result was as above - the disunity of the Khalsa.

* Gurmat Sidhant .Radha Soami Satsang
^ The Sikhs of the Punjab by J.S.Grewal.

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ਜਾਪੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ

ਜਿਸਕੋ

ਰਾਇਸਾਹਿਬਮੁਨਸ਼ੀਗੁਲਾਬਸਿੰਘ
ਐਂਡਸਨਜ਼ ਨੇ ਅਪਨੇ ਮੁਫੀਦ
ਆਮਪ੍ਰੈਸ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਮੇਂ
ਛਾਪਾ॥

ਸੰਨ ੧੮੯੭ ਈਃ

ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ

ਲਾਣਾਂ ਆਦਿਕ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਪੁਰ ਕੁਛ ਅਸਰ ਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ, ਅਰ ਹਿਰਨਸ਼ਕਸ਼ਿਪੁ ਨੂੰ ਦੰਡ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੁ ਨੇ ਨਰਸਿੰਹ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਧਾਰਿਆ.

ਪਿਤਾ ਦੇ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਜਾਣ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਦੈਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਰਾਜਾ ਬਣਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਲੱਗਾ. ਪਦਮਪੁਰਾਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਪਦਵੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੁਰੂਪ ਹੀ ਹੋਗਿਆ. ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਭਗਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ-ਧਰਮਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਦਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਰਨਾਖਸ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ. "ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਕਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਰਘੁਰਾਇ." (ਭੈਰ ਮਃ ੩) "ਏਕੁਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ." (ਭੈਰ ਮਃ ੩) "ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਭਗਤ [illegible]." (ਨਰਸਿੰਘਾਵ) ੨ ਆਨੰਦ. ਖ਼ੁਸ਼ੀ "ਦੇਨ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦ ਕੋ." (ਗੁਪ੍ਰਸੂ)

ਪ੍ਰਹਲਾਦਸਿੰਘ. ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਇੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ. ਇਸ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਦਾ ਆਰੰਭ ਇਸ ਦੋਹੇ ਤੋਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ—
"ਅਬਿਚਲਨਗਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਕੀਆ ਬਿਚਾਰ,
ਬੋਲਿਆ ਪੂਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ."
ਅਰ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮਾ ਰਚਣ ਦਾ ਸਾਲ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ—
"ਸੰਮਤ ਸਤ੍ਰਹਿ ਸੈ ਭਏ ਬਰਖ ਬਵੰਜਾ ਨਿਹਾਰ,
ਮਾਘ ਵਦੀ ਤਿਥਿ ਪੰਚਮੀ ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਸੁਭ ਵਾਰ."
ਇਸ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਖਿਆਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਸੰਮਤ੧੭੫੨ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਬਿਚਲਨਗਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਧਾਰੇ ਅਰ ਨਾ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਖ਼ਾਲਸੇ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਸੀ.

ਇਸੇ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਦੇ ਇਹ ਵਾਕ ਹਨ:—
"ਅਕਾਲਪੁਰਖ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ,
ਸਭ ਸਿੱਖਨ ਕੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ."
ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮਾਨੀਓ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ." xxx

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